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pectoral region of vertebrates contains an account of the bones, nerves, and muscles of the breast, shoulder, and wings of birds. In addition to the admirably clear descriptions of the anatomy of these organs, this part is of special interest in that it contains a full discussion of the systematic relations of the orders and families of birds as well as an account of the relations of birds to other vertebrates. The diphyletic origin of the birds as represented by the Ratitæ and Carinatae is regarded as an untenable assumption by Fürbringer, who argues for the racial unity of the whole group. From this standpoint the Ratitæ represent either a primitive stock from which the Carinatae have sprung or, as Fürbringer believes, a degenerate assemblage derived from the Carinatae. The author further believes that birds have had their origin from none of the known orders of reptiles, but from an ancient stock among the very oldest reptiles and of which at present no remains are known. p.

Spiders of the United States.¹—As the title indicates, this book was written to meet a popular need. The first part, which is given up to a short introduction on structure, collecting, and habits, might very well have been enlarged. The remainder of the book is taken up by a systematic account of spiders.

About two hundred of the common species of the eastern United States are described. The descriptions are short, often very short. The illustrations are excellent. Each species has one and often four figures to show the characteristic parts and markings. The common round web species that are found in similar places are described together. The photographs of the webs are especially good, and from them the whole process of web making can be followed.

The value of the book would have been increased for amateurs by reference to a few of the popular books on spiders, and for more advanced readers by the authorities of the species.

BOTANY.

The Yuccæ.²—At a time when systematic activity is preponderatingly segregative and the tendency to publish species separately

¹ Emerton, James H. *The Common Spiders of the United States*. Boston, Ginn & Co., 1902. 8vo, xviii + 225 pp., 501 figs.

² Trelease, William. *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Missouri Botanical Garden*, July, 1902.